

RESOLUTION  
#2023-13  
Alcona County, Michigan

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF "THE REVISED SCHOOL CODE" HB4672**

*Whereas*, “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” —George Orwell, From 1984.; and

*Whereas*, This public school law was passed to prevent “that old deluder, Satan” from “keeping men from the knowledge of the Scriptures,” as he had done in Europe for the previous several centuries. The law therefore required that local schools be started to teach all children to read, especially the Bible. Subsequent American literacy laws also stressed the importance of citizens knowing the Scriptures—as a 1690 Connecticut law, which declared: “**This [legislature] observing that . . . there are many persons unable to read the English tongue and thereby incapable to read the holy Word of God or the good laws of this colony . . . it is ordered that all parents and masters shall cause their respective children and servants, as they are capable, to be taught to read distinctly the English tongue.**”.; and

*Whereas*, Yet undoubtedly the revealed law is of infinitely more authenticity than that moral system which is framed by ethical writers, and denominated the natural law; because one is the law of nature, expressly declared so to be by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority; but, till then, they can never be put in any competition together. Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human laws should be suffered to contradict these. There are, it is true, a great number of indifferent points in which both the divine law and the natural leave a man at his own liberty, but which are found necessary, for the benefit of society, to be restrained within certain limits. . . . To instance in the case of murder: this is expressly forbidden by the divine, and demonstrably by the natural law; and, from these prohibitions, arises the true unlawfulness of this crime. Those human laws that annex a punishment to it do not at all increase its moral guilt, or superadd any fresh obligation, in foro conscientiae, to abstain from its perpetration. Nay, if any human law should allow or enjoin us to commit it, we are bound to transgress that human law, or else we must offend both the natural and the divine. But, with regard to matters that are in themselves indifferent, and are not commanded or forbidden by those superior laws,—such, for instance, as exporting of wool into foreign countries,—here the inferior legislature has scope and opportunity to interpose, and to make that action unlawful which before was not so. Commentaries on the Laws of England in Four Books, volume. 1 Sir William Blackstone pages 47 and 48; and

*Whereas*, On January 21, 1781, Robert Aitken presented a “memorial” [petition] to Congress offering to print “a neat Edition of the Holy Scriptures for the use of schools.” This is the text of that memorial: *To the Honourable The Congress of the United States of America* *The Memorial of Robert Aitken of the City of Philadelphia, Printer Under this persuasion your Memorialist begs leave to, inform your Honours That he both begun and made considerable progress in a neat Edition of the Holy Scriptures for the use of schools, But being cautious of suffering his copy of the Bible to Issue forth without the sanction of Congress, Humbly prays that your Honours would take this important matter into serious consideration & would be pleased to appoint one Member or Members of your Honourable Body to inspect his work so that the same may be published under the Authority of Congress.*; and

*Whereas*, *People v. Ruggles* is the first reported case of prosecution for blasphemy in the State of New York. On September 2, 1810, John Ruggles, speaking in a loud voice in a crowded tavern in Salem, New York, said “Jesus Christ was a bastard, and his mother must be a whore.” He was arrested, charged with blasphemy and tried in the Court of Oyer and Terminer, Washington County, on June 11, 1811. Ruggles was found guilty and Justice Ambrose Spencer sentenced him to three months in prison and fined him \$500. Chief Justice James Kent delivered the opinion of the unanimous court and stated “Though the Constitution has discarded religious establishments, it does not forbid judicial cognizance of those offences against religion and morality which have no reference to any such establishment, or to any particular form of government, but are punishable because they strike at the root of moral obligation, and weaken the security of the social ties. . . . It was not because Christianity was established by law, but because Christianity was in fact the religion of this country, the rule of our faith and practice, and the basis of the public morals. Such blasphemy was an outrage upon public decorum, and if sanctioned by our tribunals would shock the moral sense of the country, and degrade our character as a Christian people.” The Constitutional Convention then voted to confirm the Ruggles decision and Chief Justice Kent’s reasoning.; and



*Whereas, Vidal v. Girard's Executors*, 43 U.S. 127 (1844) "Secondly, I enjoin and require that no ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister of any sect whatsoever shall ever hold or exercise any station or duty whatever in the said college, nor shall any such person ever be admitted for any purpose, or as a visitor, within the premises appropriated to the purposes of the said college." But I do say, and do insist, that there is no such thing in the history of religion, no such thing in the history of human law, as a charity— a school of instruction for children from which the Christian religion and Christian teachers are excluded, as unsafe and unworthy intruders. Such a scheme is deprived of that which enters into the very essence of human benevolence, when that benevolence contemplates the instruction, that is to say, religious knowledge, connected with human knowledge ; it is this which causes it to be regarded as a charity ; and by reason of which it is entitled to the special favor of the courts of law. *Mr. Webster's speech in defence of the Christian ministry, and in favor of the religious instruction of the young : delivered in the Supreme Court of the United States, February 10, 1844 : in the case of Stephen Girard's will.* In a previous lecture, [Justice]Story had argued that Christianity was part of common law. He repeated that affirmation in Vidal, but observed that it was limited by "appropriate qualifications and in connection with the bill of rights of that state [of Pennsylvania]," which provided "that all men have a natural and indefasible [sic] right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences." Story thus observed that Christianity was part of the common law "in the qualified sense, that its divine origin and truth are admitted, and therefore it is not to be maliciously and openly ridiculed and blasphemed against.".; and

*Whereas, Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged—not any one sect. Any attempt to level and discard all religion, would have been viewed with universal indignation. The object was not to substitute Judaism, or Mahomedanism, or infidelity, but to prevent rivalry among sects to the exclusion of others. ... While your committee believe that neither Congress nor the army or navy should be deprived of the service of chaplains, they freely concede that the ecclesiastical and civil powers have been, and should continue to be, entirely divorced from each other. But we beg leave to rescue ourselves from the imputation of asserting that religion is not needed to the safety of civil society. It must be considered as the foundation on which the whole structure rests. Laws will not have permanence or power without the sanction of religious sentiment—without a firm belief that there is a Power above us that will reward our virtues and punish our vices. In this age there can be no substitute for Christianity; that, in its general principles, is the great conservative element on which we must rely for the purity and permanence of free institutions. That was the religion of the founders of the republic, and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants. ...* " The error has risen from the belief that there is no legislation unless in permissive or restricting enactments. But making a thing free is as truly a part of legislation as confining it by limitations; and what the government has made free, it is bound to keep free. Your committee recommend the following resolution: Resolved, That the committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject. CHAPLAINS IN CONGRESS AND IN THE ARMY AND NAVY. March 27, 1854.—Ordered to be printed. Mr. Meacham, from the Committee on the Judiciary, made the following REPORT. 33d Congress, 1st Session. Rep. No. 124. Ho. of REPS.; and

*Whereas, "A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about." - President Woodrow Wilson.; and*

*Whereas, In 1892, Justice Josiah David Brewer writing in Church of the Holy Trinity vs. U.S., the unanimous supreme Court decision which has never been overturned, held as a matter of law, fact, and history that "...this is a Christian nation," because our laws and public institutions are founded on Biblical principles from the Old and New Testaments. Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States, 143 U.S. 457 (1892) Page 143 U. S. 471 If we pass beyond these matters to a view of American life, as expressed by its laws, its business, its customs, and its society, we find every where a clear recognition of the same truth. Among other matters, note the following: the form of oath universally prevailing, concluding with an appeal to the Almighty; the custom of opening sessions of all deliberative bodies and most conventions with prayer; the prefatory words of all wills, "In the name of God, amen;" the laws respecting the observance of the Sabbath, with the general cessation of all secular business, and the closing of courts, legislatures, and other similar public assemblies on that day; ... These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation. In the face of all*



***Whereas, In the formative days of the Republic the directing influence the Bible exercised upon the fathers of the Nation is conspicuously evident. To Washington it contained the sure and certain moral precepts that constituted the basis of his action. That which proceeded from it transcended all other books, however elevating their thought. To his astute mind moral and religious principles were the "indispensable supports" of political prosperity, the "essential pillars of civil society." October 06, 1935 Statement on the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Printing of the English Bible Franklin Delano Roosevelt***

*Whereas*, Michigan Constitution states: Article 8 – Education - Section 1 – Encouragement of Education - Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.; and

*Therefore, Be It Further Resolved*, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Senator Michele Hoyenga, House Representative Cameron Cavitt, State Board of Education Members Marshall Bullock, Ellen Cogen Lipton, Tom McMillin, Judith Pritchett, Pamela Pugh, Mitchell Robinson, Nikki Snyder, Tiffany D. Tilley, and the other 82 Counties in the State of Michigan.

STATE OF MICHIGAN       )  
                                )  
COUNTY OF ALCONA      )

I certify tht the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the resolution adopted by the Alcona County Board of Commissioners at the Regular Meeting held on the 21st day of June, 2023 and that notice of such meeting was given as required by law.

S E A L

Stephany Eller  
Stephany Eller, Alcona County Clerk